



MINUTES

OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

February 1, 2022

MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. John Elliott, Chairman, District I
Mr. Paul Cain, Vice Chairman, District III
Mr. Julian Davis III, Chairman Pro Tem, District IV
Mr. Glenn Hart, District V
Mr. Matthew Durham, District II

Oconee County Council met at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members, County Administrator Amanda F. Brock, County Attorney David Root, & Jennifer C. Adams, Clerk to Council present.

Press: Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting, date, time, place of meeting and agenda were posted on the bulletin board at the County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, and the County Council website [www.oconeesc.com/council]. In addition, it was made available [*upon request*] to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Members of the press present: Riley Morningstar / The Journal, Clayton Caldwell / Fox Carolina News

Call to Order

Mr. Elliott called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Elliott opened the meeting reminding the public they have two opportunities to speak during Council meetings, which is during the public comment session and also during the public hearing session, if scheduled. Other than those two instances, the public should remain silent during the Council meeting. Anyone making a disturbance during the meeting will be asked to leave Council Chambers for the remainder of the meeting.

Moment of Silence

Mr. Elliott asked for a moment of silence prior to the Invocation by County Council Chaplain.

Invocation by County Council Chaplain

Mr. Root, County Council Chaplain, gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Hart led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

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Approval of Minutes

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 – 0, to approve the January 18, 2022 regular minutes as presented.

Attorney's Comments

Mr. Root informed Council that all mailings related to redistricting were sent out last week to all potentially affected citizens. Mr. Root also extended his thanks to the various departments that helped facilitate these mailings.

Mr. Elliot clarified with Mr. Root that the notification of citizens by mail was related to the redistricting of citizens from District 1 to District 2 and the redistricting of citizens from District 5 to District 4.

Mr. Root confirmed to Mr. Elliot that his statement was correct.

Administrator's Comments

Ms. Brock addressed Council concerning an email from the Rock Quarry that she received late in the afternoon, before the Council meeting. Council was informed that a copy of the email was provided for their review.

Ms. Brock explained that due to unforeseen circumstances with the haul truck at the Rock Quarry, Ordinance 2022-04, will need to be altered to include an extra \$150,000.00 for repairs to the truck.

Ms. Brock explained to Council that the haul truck is vital for continuing operations at the Rock Quarry and requested that Council consider an amendment to **Ordinance 2022-04**, to include the cost of repairs for the haul truck.

Proclamations

None scheduled for this meeting.

Public Comment Session

If you are not able to attend in person and you have a comment, you may submit it by contacting our Clerk to Council, Jennifer C. Adams at jennifercadams@oconeesc.com or 864-718-1023, so that she may receive your comment and read it into the record.

Mr. Elliott opened the floor for Public Comment.

Mr. Mickey Haney presented Mr. Hart and Mr. Durham with the “Defender of Freedom Award” on behalf of the Oconee County Conservative Group.

Mr. Frankie Pearson addressed Council in opposition of Council supporting matching funds for the regional greenway trail system.

Mr. Mike Smith addressed Council in support of Council supporting matching funds for the regional greenway trail system.

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Mr. Ted Bisterfeld addressed Council in support of Council supporting matching funds for the regional greenway trail system.

Ms. Emily Hitchcock addressed Council in support of Council supporting matching funds for the regional greenway trail system.

Mr. Andrew Smith addressed Council in support of Council supporting matching funds for the regional greenway trail system.

Council Members Comments

Mr. Durham thanked Mr. Haney for the award and congratulated Mr. Pearson on being elected Chair of the Planning Commission Board for 2022.

Mr. Durham stated he would save his comments on the matching of funds for the regional greenway trail system until it was discussed later in the meeting.

Mr. Hart stated he was humbled by the award presented to him from the Oconee County Conservative Group.

Third Reading of the Following Ordinances

None scheduled for this meeting.

Second Reading of the Following Ordinances

ORDINANCE 2022-04 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORDINANCE 2021-01, THE BUDGET FOR OCONEE COUNTY, WHICH PROVIDES FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR ORDINARY COUNTY PURPOSES, FOR THE TRI-COUNTY TECHNICAL COLLEGE SPECIAL REVENUE FUND, FOR THE EMERGENCY SERVICES PROTECTION SPECIAL REVENUE FUND, FOR THE ROAD MAINTENANCE SPECIAL REVENUE FUND, FOR THE BRIDGE AND CULVERT CAPITAL PROJECT FUND, FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL PROJECT FUND, FOR THE PARKS, RECREATION, AND TOURISM CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND, FOR THE DEBT SERVICE FUND, FOR THE VICTIM SERVICES SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS, FOR THE CAPITAL VEHICLE / EQUIPMENT FUND, ALL IN OCONEE COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2021 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2022.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, to approve **Ordinance 2022-04** on second reading.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 5 – 0, to amend **Ordinance 2022-04** to include funds, not to exceed \$150,000.00, with a 7% contingency for all unforeseen items that may arise during the repair process, for the repair of the catastrophic engine failure on the Komatsu 325-7 Backdump [haul truck] located at the Oconee County Rock Quarry.

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Mr. Durham addressed Ms. Brock asking for clarification related to the Coroner's Office and the cremation fees.

Ms. Brock provided an in depth explanation to Mr. Durham and Council related to the cremation fees incurred by the Corners Office and why the matter has been included in **Ordinance 2022-04**.

Motion approved 5 – 0.

Public Comment Session regarding Redistricting 2020

[Limited to a total of forty (40) minutes, four (4) minutes per person]

If you are not able to attend in person and you have a comment, you may submit it by emailing jennifercadams@oconeesc.com or calling 864-718-1023, so that your comment may be read it into the record.

Ms. Lynn Martin, a resident of Tamassee, addressed Council with her concerns of how citizens, that may be affected by the redistricting, were to be notified about the process. Ms. Martin also commented that she was in support of comments made at the last meeting from Ms. Janie Shipley in regards to redistricting.

Mr. Eddie Martin, a resident of Tamassee, addressed Council in opposition of the redistricting of a portion of Tamassee from District 1 to District 2.

Mr. Elliot directed Mr. Root to review, for the public and Council, the information that was mailed last week to potentially affected citizens in regards to redistricting.

Mr. Root addressed Council and the public informing them that this is the fifth meeting in regards to redistricting.

Mr. Root further explained what the mailings included, to whom the mailings were sent, and went on to inform Council and the public of the two upcoming public hearings regarding Redistricting 2020.

ORDINANCE 2022-05 AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT A REDISTRICTING PLAN FOR OCONEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart to approve **Ordinance 2022-05** on second reading.

Mr. Durham responded to Ms. Martin's public comments in regards to the mailings that went out last week to potential affected citizens.

Mr. Durham responded to Mr. Martin's public comments regarding redistricting.

Mr. Davis noted that the reason for redistricting is not a Council decision, it comes from the Census. He extended his thanks to Mr. Elliot for continuing to have Public Comment Sessions on the agenda that allow input related to redistricting from the citizens of Oconee County.

Motion approved 5 – 0.

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ORDINANCE 2022-06 AN ORDINANCE APPROVING “THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO THE DECLARATION OF COVENANTS, CONDITIONS, RESTRICTIONS, AND EASEMENTS FOR THE OCONEE INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY PARK F/K/A THE ECHO HILLS BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL PARK” (“FIRST AMENDMENT TO THE DECLARATION”); APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND RECORDATION OF THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO THE DECLARATION; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 5 – 0, to approve **Ordinance 2022-06** on second reading.

First Reading of the Following Ordinances

ORDINANCE 2022-07 AN ORDINANCE TO APPROPRIATE AND AUTHORIZE THE EXPENDITURE OF A PORTION OF LOCAL CORONAVIRUS FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDING UNDER THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 (“ARPA”), FOR PURPOSES OF ESTABLISHING “PREMIUM PAY” TO ELIGIBLE OCONEE COUNTY EMPLOYEES; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to approve **Ordinance 2022-07** on first reading.

Mr. Durham inquired about how the volunteers with the Emergency Services would be compensated.

Ms. Brock informed Mr. Durham that there would be a separate request allocation related to Emergency Services volunteers for Premium Pay.

Motion approved 5 – 0.

First & Final Reading for the Following Resolutions

None scheduled for this meeting.

Discussion Regarding Action Items

Title: Airport Engineer & Consultant

Department: Airport

Amount: N/A

Most Airport engineering services are funded by the FAA through grants for approved projects. The FAA would pay 95% of the costs, the State pays 2.5% and a matching 2.5% is required from County funds. Future projects will be brought to Council on an individual basis when project costs exceed \$50,000.

A Request for Qualifications, RFQ 21-05, for Professional Engineer and Consulting Services for Oconee County Airport was issued on August 19, 2021 and sent to 18 firms. Six (6) responses were received on September 21, 2021. An Evaluation Committee consisting of County Staff and Airport Commission personnel, reviewed and scored the submissions and recommended four (4) firms: Delta Airport Consultants, Holt Consulting Company, Michael Baker International, and W.K. Dickson to be short-listed to continue on

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with Phase Two of the selection process. On October 26, 2021, RFP 21-08, Professional Services – Airport Engineer and Consultant, Phase Two, was issued to the four short-listed firms and on December 7, 2021, four proposals were received. The same Evaluation Committee met and reviewed and scored these proposals and recommended W.K. Dickson, of Columbia, SC for award.

FAA regulations state that this award shall be for a five-year period.

It is the staff's recommendation that Council approve the award of RFP 21-08 for Professional Services – Airport Engineer and Consultant, Phase Two, to W. K. Dickson & Company, Inc., of Columbia, SC for a five-year term for services as needed.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, to approve the award of RFP 21-08 for Professional Services – Airport Engineer and Consultant, Phase Two, to W. K. Dickson & Company, Inc., of Columbia, SC for a five-year term for services as needed.

Mr. Davis noted that he was thankful for the delay of approval for this action item and that he had more time to take a more in depth look at the request.

Mr. Davis stated he will be in favor of the approval of this award.

Motion approved 3 – 2, with Mr. Hart and Mr. Durham opposed.

Title: Self-Contained Breathing Apparatuses (SCBA's)

Department(s): Emergency Services

Amount: \$1,250,397.20

The main mission of Oconee County Emergency Services is to provide maximum safety for all personnel. The recent assessment of the SCBA's in service indicated that the majority are not certified to the newest National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standard. NFPA updates standards every five (5) years and the latest 2018 update states that all SCBA's must be Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) certified, heat rating increase and testing on face piece along with data logging all resulting in upgraded safety features to the responder. Upgrades can only be completed within 2 revision cycles, which is ten (10) years and the age of the majority of the current equipment exceeds that. This replacement, including the newest models where upgrading was not cost feasible, will insure our SCBA's meet the NFPA 2018 Standard.

On August 13, 2021, Oconee County Emergency Services was awarded an Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) to replace self-contained breathing apparatuses along with spare cylinders and face pieces in the amount of \$998,636.36. The County will be responsible for \$251,760.84 of this purchase. The funds that will be utilized for the match will come from the SCBA budget for FY 2021-2022.

There are two brands of SCBA's offered within close proximity of Oconee: MSA and Scott. An evaluation committee, composed of Fire Chiefs across Oconee County discussed the features preferred and required in the SCBA's. The evaluation committee participated in demonstrations and field testing of each brand. The evaluation committee discussed and documented the pros and cons of each SCBA brand. Once the evaluation was complete, the committee voted and unanimously recommended MSA brand SCBA's.

It is the staff's recommendation that Council approve the award of SCBA's to Allsource Enterprise, LLC., dba Safe Industries, of Easley, SC in the amount of \$1,250,397.20.

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Mr. Davis make a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 5 – 0, to approve the award of SCBA’s to Allsource Enterprise, LLC., dba Safe Industries, of Easley, SC in the amount of \$1,250,397.20.

Ms. Brock noted after the vote that Oconee County was awarded a grant in the amount of \$998,636.00 for assistance in purchasing Self-Contained Breathing Apparatuses (SCBA’s).

Ms. Brock also gave kudos to the Emergency Services Department and the Grants Administration Team at Oconee County for aiming toward and being awarded almost a million dollars toward the replacement of SCBA’s for all seventeen member stations.

Request for Council’s approval to commit matching funds, not to exceed \$300,000, toward the application for the FY2021 American Rescue Plan Act Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grant for the survey, design and permitting of a regional greenway trail system.

Department: Planning

Amount: Not to Exceed \$ 300,000

- The application is for survey, design, and permitting of a regional trail system.
- The City of Clemson, Clemson University, Town of Pendleton, and Oconee County will apply as a regional group with assistance from Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG).
- Total design miles in Oconee County 15.7 (route attached).
- It is a 20% matching grant.
- Estimated cost is \$1,428,700, the County match would be approximately \$285,740, not to exceed \$300,000.
- If approved, the grant money would be financially managed by City of Clemson, with a leadership team from each invested organization.
- The grant is a reimbursing grant, if awarded, the County would be reimbursed for spent funds as often as quarterly, after milestone completion.
- Application deadline is January 31, 2022.

As part of the 2020 Comprehensive Plan and 2021 County Council Strategic Plan, Oconee County prioritized partnering with public and private entities to develop a county greenway system that will offer opportunities for nature-based recreation in areas where few currently exist.

Oconee County requests the commitment of the balance of funding needed for the regional trail system project from the Capital Projects Fund. The allocation of funds is contingent on the award from the FY2021 American Rescue Plan Act Travel, Tourism and Outdoor EDA Grant program.

It is the staff’s recommendation that Council approve the commitment of matching funds, not to exceed \$300,000, toward the application for the FY2021 American Rescue Plan Act Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grant.

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to approve the commitment of matching funds, not to exceed \$300,000, toward the application for the FY2021 American Rescue Plan Act Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grant.

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Lengthy discussion followed by Council members regarding the commitment of matching funds, not to exceed \$300,000, toward the application for the FY2021 American Rescue Plan Act Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grant.

Motion approved 3 – 2, with Mr. Hart and Mr. Durham opposed.

Council Committee Reports

None scheduled for this meeting.

Board & Commission Appointments

Building Codes Appeal Board

1 At-Large Seat: No questionnaire on file for this seat

Arts and Historical Commission

District 3 Seat: No questionnaire on file for this seat

At-Large Seat: No questionnaire on file for this seat

Executive Session:

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 – 0, to enter into Executive Session for the following purposes, as allowed for in § 30-4-70(a) of the South Carolina Code of Laws:

[1] Discussion regarding a personnel matter related to Rock Quarry, Roads and Bridges, and Solid Waste departments.

Council entered Executive Session at 6:59 p.m.

Council returned from Executive Session at 7:23 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. Cain, seconded by Mr. Davis, approved 5 – 0.

Council consideration and approval of amended job descriptions and reclassification of specific positions in the Rock Quarry, Roads and Bridges, and Solid Waste departments

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 – 0, to approve of amended job descriptions and reclassification of specific positions in the Rock Quarry, Roads and Bridges, and Solid Waste departments.

Adjourn:

Mr. Hart made a motion, approved unanimously, to adjourn at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jennifer C. Adams
Clerk to Council

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